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COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES
UNDER ARTICLE 44 OF THE CONVENTION

Initial reports of States parties due in 1996

Kyrgyzstan

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Introduction

1. The Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted by the United Nations on 20 November 1989. It has come to be known as the Children's Magna Carta, the world constitution for the rights of the child. The Convention is more thorough than the instruments concerning the rights of the child previously adopted, and the first to give the rights of the child the force of international law and make them binding on the future. The parliaments and governments of many countries, after acquainting themselves with the text of the Convention prior to ratification, went on to adopt it. For various reasons, such as economic difficulties or inability to meet the high standards of the Convention, others abstained.

2. Our country and Parliament (Zhogorku Kenesh), having chosen the path of independent and sovereign development, ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child in January 1994, thereby taking upon themselves the obligation to implement those rights in the domestic legislation and secure them economically and socially. For Kyrgyzstan, which has opted for openness and trust, close cooperation with the international organizations and constructive dialogue between governmental and non-governmental organizations and movements, this is a very timely document.

3. The report has been prepared on the basis of the general guidelines regarding the form and content of initial reports to be submitted under article 44.1 (a) of the Convention (CRC/C/5). It makes use of information received from the ministries and administrative departments of the Kyrgyz Republic responsible for issues pertaining to the situation of children and the protection of their rights, as well as from voluntary organizations concerned with the problems of childhood. It gives a description of the situation of children in the Kyrgyz Republic which reflects the influence of contemporary socio-economic processes while providing information, article by article, on the measures Kyrgyzstan has taken to fulfil its obligations under the Convention. This is accompanied by an account of the progress made, the difficulties encountered and the plans for further implementation.

4. The basic legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic, including the laws of the Kyrgyz Soviet Socialist Republic and the Soviet Union still in force, is analysed in the report, together with the instruments adopted in the process of implementing the provisions of the Convention. The annexes* contain various statistics, a list of laws and other enactments, and certain additional information with a bearing on the subject matter of the report.

5. The following participated in the preparation of the national report: the Deputy Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic, M. K. Jangarachev, Chairman of the Commission set up to prepare the report, and the following members of the Commission: A. A. Sabirov, M.P., R. A. Achilova, M.P., M.Sh. Kasymaliev, First Deputy Minister of Justice of the Kyrgyz Republic, G. A. Kulikova, Deputy Minister of Education, Science and Culture of the Kyrgyz Republic,

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* Available for consultation in the files of the secretariat in English and Russian only.

T. D. Abdraimov, Deputy Minister of Health of the Kyrgyz Republic, I. K. Kasendeev and A. T. Kerimkulov, Deputy Ministers of Labour and Social Security of the Kyrgyz Republic, K. D. Koichumanova, Deputy Chairman of the National Statistics Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic, Z. A. Abylaev, Director of the Children's Fund of the Kyrgyz Republic, and T. G. Vinnikova, representing the Office of the Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic.

6. The report on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child was considered at a meeting of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic and approved by decision of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic No. 717 of 8 December 1997.

7. The Kyrgyz mass media broadcast a series of open programmes on "Children and their rights in Kyrgyzstan", together with short films, made with foreign partners, on juvenile crime and public morality in Kyrgyzstan and on the responsibility of parents, and adults in general, in the face of the deepening crisis.

8. From the wide-ranging discussion of the material relating to the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child it emerged that the Government and governmental, international and non-governmental organizations have already begun to work constructively on solving the problems. This includes the children themselves from such non-governmental organizations as the Academy of Civil Liberties (N. Zabolotskikh), the Educational Centre for the Vocational Training of Disabled Children (N. Semenenko), the Children's Fund of the Kyrgyz Republic (Z. Abylaev), the Talent Support Fund (D. Chochunbaeva), etc.

9. A significant event in the life of the Republic was the presentation of the National Report on the Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in the Kyrgyz Republic (January 1998, Bishkek), attended by the UNICEF representatives for Central Asia, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, members of the Kyrgyz Parliament, representatives of the Meerim Foundation, members of the preparatory Commission, and the deputy heads of the Chu, Talas, Naryn and Issyk-Kul State administrations and the municipal government of the city of Bishkek. Representatives of the non-governmental organizations and of press, television and radio also participated in the presentation.

10. On 28 May 1997, in his address to the National Forum on Sustainable Human Development, the President of the Kyrgyz Republic, A. A. Akayev, said: "We see our society as bent on progress, open, democratic, tolerant, just and socially oriented, and as well-informed, scientific and innovative, economically strong and politically wise. Kyrgyzstan will succeed in finding its special but fitting place in the ranks of the civilized countries of the world." The implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child will be invaluable in helping Kyrgyzstan to fulfil these aspirations.

I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

11. Basic information concerning the demographic, economic and political structures of Kyrgyzstan may be found in the core document (HRI/CORE/1/Add.101) submitted by the Government of Kyrgyzstan in February 1999. The annexes to the present document contain further

statistical information in that regard. The following paragraphs provide background information specifically concerning the situation of children in Kyrgyzstan.

12. Despite the difficult socio-economic situation and the sharply reduced budget for health care, the preventive clinics and hospitals still provide a guaranteed amount of free medical attention for children under 14. However, where necessary, in special situations, by agreement with the parents, a charge is made for expensive drugs and tests (see tables 21 and 22). Children's health is also being affected by the disturbed ecological balance in the Republic and the hazardous state of radioactive waste burial sites and tailings ponds.

13. In 1996, atmospheric pollution measurements showed that in cities with a predominance of power industry enterprises the concentrations of specific impurities quite often exceed the norm. Instances of atmospheric pollution levels exceeding the maximum permissible concentrations (MPC) of nitrogen dioxide, formaldehyde and carbon monoxide were recorded in Bishkek (6-7 times above the limit) and Osh (2-3 times above the limit) and instances of excessive nitrogen dioxide (2-3 times above the limit) in Kara-Balta. As far as emissions are concerned, the main polluters are Bishkek, which accounts for 38 per cent of total emissions, and Kara-Balta.

14. According to departmental statistics, in recent years among adolescents aged 15 to 17 there has been an almost twofold increase in the incidence of such illnesses as infectious and parasitogenic diseases, diseases of the endocrine system, and disorders of the immune system, metabolism and musculo-skeletal apparatus.

15. In 1996, there were 92 recorded cases of venereal disease in children between 0 and 14 years of age and 184 cases in adolescents aged 15 to 17; in Bishkek the number of syphilis patients (per 100,000 children) increased by 440 per cent, which is three times higher than the national indicator. The incidence of syphilis was found to have risen significantly among university students and among pupils in the specialized secondary, general and vocational schools. Cases of congenital syphilis were recorded (see annex I, table 18).

16. Until 1996, the Kyrgyz Republic was free of AIDS. However, in 1997 three cases of HIV-positive persons arriving from the near abroad were reported. In one case HIV infection was detected in a pregnant woman who is expected to give birth to a child also infected with the human immunodeficiency virus.

17. The deterioration of the socio-economic situation has led to an increase in the number of cases of tuberculosis. There were 482 recorded cases of tuberculosis in children in 1995 and 673 or 39.5 per 100,000 in 1996. An epidemic of meningococcal infection took the lives of 10 to 25 per cent of the children affected. The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic has adopted the State tuberculosis programme for 1996-2005 which is aimed at stabilizing the incidence of tuberculosis (see annex I, table 15).

18. Since 1990, there has been a 370 per cent decline in the number of pre-school establishments and a 450 per cent reduction in their intake; half

the existing establishments are in need of major repairs. The Presidential Decree on urgent measures to provide for the continued use of social infrastructure of 16 February 1995 enabled State administrations and the education authorities to stop selling and converting departmental pre-school facilities. State pre-school establishments, family and seasonal nurseries, initial secondary school classes and "kindergarten-school" complexes are now being opened on this basis (see annex I, table 5).

19. The general school system lacks supplies and equipment. A considerable number of buildings are in need of major repairs or are totally dilapidated. Because of financial cutbacks most schools are operating in two or three shifts and classes are overcrowded (see annex I, table 4). In order to improve the state of education, the Kyrgyz Republic is taking advantage of assistance offered by the Asian Bank for Reconstruction and Development. In 1996, a 2,478,000 dollar credit was made available for 118 computer classes. In the next five years the Asian Bank is planning to disburse 35 million dollars to be used for reforming the education system and building up its material resources.

20. The decline in economic activity has severely affected the vocational and technical training system. The labour market situation has changed. The economy's reduced labour requirements have led to a considerable decrease in the number of young students and the schools are short of modern equipment and teaching aids.

21. Most boarding schools are experiencing difficulties with obtaining the necessary supplies and equipment and meeting the children's everyday needs. There has been an increasing number of cases of large and poor families seeking to have children placed in children's homes because of the high cost of caring for them. In general, there is a sharply increasing need for establishments of the boarding school type in which the children are looked after by the State.

22. In 1996, juvenile crime increased by 22.6 per cent as compared with 1995 and in the first nine months of 1997 it accounted for 6.4 per cent of the total number of crimes recorded in the Republic. In 1996, the number of offenders increased by 4.2 per cent (from 1,605 in 1995 to 1,673 in 1996), the majority being schoolchildren and jobless adolescents not attending school. Every fifth offence is committed by adolescents forming part of a group and every third offence with the participation of adults (see annexe I, tables 23, 24, 25, 26 and 27).

23. In view of the difficult circumstances in which minors now find themselves, on 1 July 1997, at the initiative of the Commission for Minors, the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic adopted Special Decision No. 395 of 1 July 1997 on the juvenile delinquency situation and further preventive measures, which proposes means of improving the circumstances of children and adolescents. In 1997, the measures adopted, the revival of the economy and the stabilization of the social security system led to a certain reduction in the level of juvenile delinquency.

24. Special studies show that over 80 per cent of neglected children have families. In 1996, the proportion of children with no parents or only one handed over to the Republic's transit centres for minors amounted to 29 per cent and 33 per cent respectively, the corresponding figures for the first nine months of 1997 being 21 per cent and 22 per cent.

25. The enforced idleness of those who are neither studying nor working is an independent cause of juvenile delinquency. The adverse trends are being considerably reinforced by the inaccessibility of most forms of leisure activity due to commercialization and high prices and the decline in the number of clubs, sports organizations, music schools, study groups, etc. Idleness among the young constitutes an additional source of criminality, a sort of criminal niche filled by various negative manifestations, delinquency and neglect, alcoholism and drug addiction, child prostitution and vagrancy, and the involvement of minors in organized crime.

26. On 1 September 1997, there were 56,500 persons officially registered as unemployed or 25 per cent less than in 1996. The factors responsible for the fall in unemployment include the reorientation of the population towards individual production and small-scale enterprise, thanks in no small measure to the possibility of obtaining grants and loans from local and international organizations. Moreover, agrarian reform has made it possible for many villagers to become landowners, which has provided them with permanent employment. The foremost beneficiaries of these positive developments have been women, who account for 57.6 per cent of the total number of unemployed. In order further to reduce the level of female unemployment measures are being taken to develop private enterprise and increase the number of women homeworkers. Within the framework of a project of the German Society for Technical Cooperation, steps are being taken to train unemployed women and organize self-employment. Three women's projects are currently being carried out in the cities of Bishkek, Karakol and Talas.

27. The possibilities of placing young men and women and adolescents in jobs have expanded considerably since January 1996 when a specialized unit was set up in Bishkek with the support of the German Society for Technical Cooperation. In the last two years, 3,000 young people have applied to this unit and of these about 2,000 have been placed in jobs and a further 500 sent for training. In the opinion of the German Society for Technical Cooperation, not only has this relieved the strain on the labour market in the capital of the Republic but the project itself has been carried out more effectively than in any other CIS country. "Job-seekers clubs" have been established to provide the unemployed with psychological support and help them acquire the skills necessary to find suitable employment. The maximum monthly unemployment benefit is one and a half times the minimum wage (135 som on 1 January 1998) plus an additional 10 per cent where there are children under 14. For these purposes during the current year the Unemployment Fund of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security is disbursing 3.2 million som per month, as compared with 2.9 million in 1996.

II. GENERAL IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES
(arts. 4, 42 and 44 (6) of the Convention)

28. On 12 January 1994, the Convention on the Rights of the Child was ratified by the Zhogorku Kenesh of the Kyrgyz Republic. This required the promulgation of a series of measures to create the legal machinery for implementing the provisions of the Convention. These measures include the adoption of new laws, the modification of existing laws and the drafting of normative and legal instruments to regulate the activities of the State organs for the protection of the rights and interests of children.

29. The Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic provides for treaties and other instruments of international law ratified by the Kyrgyz Republic to be an integral and directly applicable part of the legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic. By virtue of this constitutional provision the Convention on the Rights of the Child is an integral and directly applicable part of the legislation of Kyrgyzstan.

30. The substance of the measures taken to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child is described in the corresponding sections of this report. Draft laws and proposals which take into account State policy on the rights of the child and social assistance for families and children and comprehensive national programmes such as A Healthy Nation, Ayalzat and Madaniyat have been drawn up, and on 20 March 1996 the President of the Kyrgyz Republic issued a decree on the principal objectives of the national education programme Bilim.

31. The independent research centre Women in Development, has carried out an extensive (in Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan) sociological survey on the situation of young girls in Central Asia, the results of which were presented at the Inter-Parliamentary Conference on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Central Asia and Kazakhstan (20-22 February 1997).

32. At all levels of the Kyrgyz Republic, there are bodies that deal with the problems of families, women and children. The Legislative Assembly of the Zhogorku Kenesh has a Committee on Education, Women, the Family and Youth which protects the interests of minors when new laws are being debated in Parliament. At the initiative of women deputies, joint parliamentary hearings of the two chambers of the Zhogorku Kenesh, one on the implementation of the Education Act and the other on the situation of women and children in Kyrgyzstan, were held on 22 April and 12 October 1996, respectively.

33. The coordination and conduct of State policy on the family, women, children and youth have been entrusted to the State Commission of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic for Family, Women's and Youth Affairs. The Government has also set up a Commission for Minors and similar bodies have been established in the regions.

34. Most of the work of making the principles and provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child known to adults and children is being done by the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Commission for Minors, the

Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, the Ministry of Health, the State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company, other interested ministries and departments, and the NGOs.

35. The text of the Convention has been circulated in every region of the Republic among State and non-State bodies and reproduced in the newspaper Ukuk (1994), and 20,000-copy editions have been published in each of three languages (Kyrgyz, Uzbek and Russian) by the Social Fund for the Promotion of Education of the city of Jalal Abad (1997). Further steps are being taken to make people more widely aware of this important document. It is planned to produce textbooks on human rights for senior classes. The International Committee of the Red Cross is funding the mass distribution of a textbook Chelovek i Obshchestvo (The Individual and Society) which, among other things, outlines the main concepts of international humanitarian law as it relates to the child.

36. Efforts to make the contents of this report widely known to the public began in the drafting stage. Ordinance No. 83-r of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic established a special Commission, including representatives of government departments and NGOs, to prepare for the compilation of the report and to investigate local implementation of the provisions of the Convention. The Commission held a series of meetings and consultations and organized a study, including visits to the regions, of the progress being made in applying the Convention. Progress reports were prepared and considered at a meeting of the Commission for Minors in April 1997. The draft report was sent to all the ministries and administrative departments and their comments and suggestions were taken into account as it was being finalized. Special measures were taken to make the report widely available to the public. These included printing large numbers of copies, publishing excerpts in the press and arranging for the report to be discussed on radio and television. The results formed the subject of a television round table.

37. On 25 October 1997, the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, with the support of the Government, will hold an international forum entitled "Children in the modern world". The programme will include such questions as "Democracy and children", "The rights of the child through the mouths of children", and "Human resources for the twenty-first century and me".

III. DEFINITION OF THE CHILD (art. 1)

38. The domestic legislation still lacks a specific definition of the child as an independent entity with a clear legal status. However, the legal position of a citizen of an age which fits the description of a "child" given in the Convention is governed by individual laws of the Kyrgyz Republic.

39. In the light of the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by the Kyrgyz Republic, Article 1 of the draft Law of the Kyrgyz Republic on the defence and protection of the interests of minors, approved by Decision of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic No. 386 of 30 June 1997 and sent to Parliament for consideration, contains the following definition: "In the Kyrgyz Republic a person is recognized as being a minor until he or she reaches the age of 18".

40. The rights of minors are regulated by the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Marriage and Family Code, the health, education and labour legislation, the provisions of the Civil, Penal and Administrative Codes, and other enactments.

41. On 1 January 1997, there were 1,984,309 children and adolescents under the age of 18 living in the Kyrgyz Republic, including:

Age, in years	Number
0	106 090
1-6	689 244
0-16	1 894 435
0-17	1 984 309

42. Under the Civil Code of the Kyrgyz Republic, the passive capacity to possess civil rights and duties arises at birth and expires at death, while the capacity actively to acquire civil rights and exercise them and to create civil duties for oneself and fulfil them comes fully into effect only when a person reaches majority, i.e. at the age of 18. By way of exception, full civil capacity may be acquired by persons who marry before reaching the age of 18, and persons who have reached the age of 16 and are working under a contract of employment or, with the consent of the parents, adoptive parents or guardians, are engaged in a business activity.

43. Kyrgyz law does not provide for a minimum age for obtaining legal or medical counselling without parental consent. As a citizen, a minor may independently seek legal advice from the child welfare authorities, the Commission for Minors and other State services. As regards the medical care or surgical treatment of minors, it is provided with parental consent, except where urgent medical assistance is required.

44. As a rule, schooling begins not later than the age of 7, depending on the wishes of the parents or their legal representatives. Only general education at the primary level was considered compulsory. However, on 17 June 1997 the Legislative Assembly of the Zhogorku Kenesh adopted amendments and additions to the existing Education Act which establish general secondary (complete) education as compulsory and free.

45. The Penal Code of the Kyrgyz Republic establishes penalties for preventing a child from receiving compulsory education, namely up to one year of corrective labour, a fine or the application of social measures.

46. Among low-income families, because of their difficult circumstances, there are cases of parents who, lacking the means to provide maintenance and schooling, send their children out to work or leave them to their own devices. Thus, in 1996, there were 16,000 pupils who left school without completing the compulsory course of instruction, i.e. nine grades. The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic has adopted a decision on a draft law of the Kyrgyz Republic introducing amendments and additions to the Education Act (12 May 1997) and sent it to the Zhogorku Kenesh for consideration; this draft law provides for

the introduction of compulsory general secondary education, which will help to reduce the number of drop-outs from the nine grades. Decision No. 396 of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic of 1 July 1997 on the juvenile delinquency situation and further preventive measures restored the State reporting procedure requiring education departments to account for drop-outs and neglected children in the general schools. In 1997, thanks to the measures taken by the local education authorities (organization of transport, provision of material aid through education support funds, and placing children in boarding schools, guardianship, children's homes, evening schools, etc.), the number of drop-outs has definitely been declining. However, about 4,000 children are still excluded from compulsory education. These are mainly children with special educational needs. The State authorities are currently endeavouring to strengthen the network of schools, including boarding schools, for children with mental and physical disabilities, which will make it possible to provide education for all categories of children within the next few years.

47. It is forbidden to employ anyone under 15 years old. Minors may not be employed to do heavy labour, under conditions that are harmful or dangerous to health, on night-work or overtime, on weekends or public holidays, or if the work is such as to prevent the child from receiving a basic education (Labour Code of the Kyrgyz Republic).

48. However, an inadequate standard of living is forcing children and adolescents to leave school in order to earn money, to the detriment of their intellectual development. In practice, they find employment in unskilled jobs, which in some cases can be dangerous for growing boys and girls, and generally in the private sector where, unfortunately, the requirements of the law are not always respected.

49. Article 18 of the Marriage and Family Code prohibits marriage before the age of 18. In exceptional cases, at the separate request of both partners, the age at which the woman may marry can be lowered, but not by more than one year.

50. Under the Penal Code of the Kyrgyz Republic, persons may be held criminally liable for:

- having sexual relations and engaging in other acts of a sexual nature with someone under the age of 16 (art. 132);

- entering into de facto marital relations with someone not yet of marriageable age (art. 154);

- acts of depravity with respect to someone known to be under the age of 14 (art. 153).

51. According to article 10 of the Universal Military Service Act, a citizen must be 18 before he or she can volunteer for military service. The same article establishes the age of conscription at 18.

52. Article 25 of the draft Law of the Kyrgyz Republic on the defence and protection of the interests of minors prohibits the recruitment of minors to participate in military operations and armed conflicts.

53. Under the Penal Code of the Kyrgyz Republic, no one can be held criminally responsible before he or she has reached the age of 14. The presumption of innocence and the protection of the rights of the child when he or she incurs criminal liability are governed by the provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure and the Penal Code which, when a minor is the subject of investigation, provides for the participation of defence counsel from the time of detention. At all stages of a criminal proceeding against a minor the parents or those in loco parentis have the right to be present, unless their presence is contrary to the interests of the minor.

54. From the age of 14, minor citizens who have committed a serious offence may be deprived of their liberty.

55. Minors may be called as witnesses in civil and criminal cases.

56. Once a child has reached the age of 10, his or her views are taken into account by the court in settling disputes between the parents over the child's place of residence and upbringing (Marriage and Family Code of the Kyrgyz Republic).

57. A citizen may change his given name, patronymic or family name once he or she has reached the age of 16.

58. Only citizens with legal capacity over the age of 18 may become adoptive parents or guardians, with the exception of persons deprived of their parental or adoption rights and those relieved of their duties of care or guardianship for failing to perform them properly.

59. Restrictions may be imposed on access to information concerning the biological family only in order to ensure the confidentiality of adoption.

60. Irrespective of the provisions of the will, the children of a person deceased who are not yet of age or unable to work (including adopted children of the deceased and those born after his death) inherit not less than two thirds of the estate.

61. Minors under the age of 14 are subject to certain restrictions on the independent completion of property transactions, which must be concluded entirely by their legal representatives acting on their behalf.

62. There are no restrictions on minors establishing (or joining) children's or youth associations with lawful aims and purposes.

63. Under the trading regulations, the age limit for purchasing alcoholic beverages is 21.

IV. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

A. Non-discrimination (art. 2)

64. Under the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic and the legislation governing the legal status of a citizen residing in Kyrgyzstan, children are accorded all their rights irrespective of colour, religion, language, ethnic or social origin, and physical or mental condition. The Constitution recognizes the fundamental human rights and freedoms belonging to everyone from birth as absolute, inalienable and protected by law and the courts. Discrimination and the limitation of rights and freedoms recognized by international law are banned. The State protects children from all forms of discrimination on general principles.

65. In 1996, the legal basis for protection against discrimination was strengthened when the Kyrgyz Republic ratified a series of international conventions:

Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;

Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others;

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination;

Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide;

International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid;

International Convention against Apartheid in Sports;

Slavery Convention and Protocol amending the Slavery Convention;

Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery.

66. It is a feature of the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic that it recognizes and supports folk customs and traditions that are consistent with human rights and freedoms. In the schools, in order to develop cultures and preserve traditions, the children receive instruction in their native language.

67. Every year, the Experimental Prosthetic-Orthopaedic Rehabilitation Centre treats about 20,000 people with various ailments of the musculo-skeletal system. Between 1992 and 1997, the Centre manufactured 14,706 prosthetic-orthopaedic appliances, 29,695 pairs of orthopaedic shoes, and more than 36,000 different medical and prophylactic items, including 826 pairs of orthopaedic shoes, 124 prostheses and 1,384 orthopaedic appliances for disabled children.

68. In the last two or three years, there has been an increase in the number of vagrant children who take to thievery and begging and at best live hand to mouth. Alongside the existing State services dealing with the problems of neglected children (transit centres for minors), in 1996 the "Street Children" project began to be implemented with the assistance of the non-governmental organization Children's Fund; an overnight accommodation centre, where children can obtain a bed, food, medical attention, basic vocational training and psychological rehabilitation has been opened in Bishkek. Shelters providing temporary accommodation for children are also being opened in other areas outside the capital.

69. The Freedom of Religion and Religious Organizations Act consolidates the constitutional right to a religion, to the protection of a person's rights and interests irrespective of religious affiliation, and to access to various forms of education regardless of religion.

70. The laws of the Kyrgyz Republic which deal with questions of survival provide for the protection of citizens' rights, freedoms and legal interests:

(a) The Constitution and the Penal Code of the Kyrgyz Republic establish the equality of citizens before the law and the courts irrespective of property, social status, race, religion, occupation and other circumstances;

(b) The Civil Code of the Kyrgyz Republic guarantees that the legal capacity of children shall not be restricted, except as stipulated by law;

(c) Part 1 of the Civil Code of the Kyrgyz Republic has been revised to take into account the country's achievement of independence, the new market economy, and the protection and defence of private property.

71. The Education Act affirms the constitutional right of children to education irrespective of property, social position, nationality or religion, guarantees free primary, secondary and vocational education and, on the basis of a competitive examination, free university education. The national education programme Bilim grants special privileges to children from low-income families, disabled children, children with developmental problems, children from problem families, and orphans.

72. A society's concern for the children and their future is a very important measure of its humanity and level of civilization. The legislative provisions mentioned above are not in themselves sufficient to ensure that children are fully able to exercise their rights. The stratification of society in terms of wealth and the introduction of remunerated services in the areas of medicine, education, culture and recreation have made those services less accessible to many people, particularly children.

B. The best interests of the child (art. 3)

73. The guaranteeing of the rights of children to life and development depends on the economic stability of the State and the level of development of the social security system. The Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic gives

children the right to maintenance and education and establishes the right of parents to bring up their children, in parallel with their responsibilities and civic duties, within the framework of the law in force.

74. The Marriage and Family Code of the Kyrgyz Republic lays down a procedure under which in circumstances that threaten the life or health of the child the child welfare authorities may take the decision to deprive the parents of their parental rights or rights of adoption. The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic has approved a decision, dated 15 November 1994, on the adoption procedure for minors deprived of parental care.

75. The legislation provides for the right of children to turn to the child welfare authorities for protection of their rights and interests when these are infringed by the parents or those in loco parentis. A new method of protecting the rights and interests of children in accordance with international practice is proposed in the new draft Family Code of the Kyrgyz Republic, namely the right of children to seek redress in the courts from the age of 14.

76. A presidential decree setting out the objectives of the national programme Ayalzat (Woman) for the period 1996-2000 was adopted on 6 March 1996. This programme addresses the education of women and means of improving their functional literacy, reducing maternal and infant mortality, overcoming poverty among women and creating more jobs for them, as well as the establishment of special support programmes for young girls, the curbing of all forms of violence, etc.

77. The Labour Code of the Kyrgyz Republic guarantees every citizen the right to work, taking into account his or her education, aspirations and possibilities, grants a number of privileges to minors, and forbids their employment under conditions which are dangerous to their health or prevent them from receiving a basic education (art. 53).

78. With a view to protecting the life and dignity of the child, the Penal Code of the Kyrgyz Republic defines the offence, fixes the punishment and establishes the liability of persons found guilty of involving children in crime, begging or prostitution, of reducing a minor to a state of intoxication, or involving children or adolescents in the non-medicinal use of medicaments and other substances having a narcotic effect.

79. Caring for and bringing up one's children is the constitutional duty of every citizen. The Marriage and Family Code of the Kyrgyz Republic defines the duties of parents and their responsibility for the physical development and education of their children. It also establishes the legislative procedure governing the relations between parents and children and the basis of their rights and duties. In order to protect the child, limits are imposed on the parental rights, which may be exercised only in the interests of the child.

80. For the purpose of protecting the interests of the child, it is planned that Parliament should consider draft laws of the Kyrgyz Republic on the rights of the child and on the procedure for inter-country adoption of a child citizen of the Kyrgyz Republic.

81. However, in view of the country's economic instability, these legal provisions in themselves are not enough to ensure that the best interests of the child are always served. For example, in autumn in the south of the Republic, despite the Labour Code, children are taken away from school to harvest cotton. When not attending school, many children are forced to help their parents and, in summer, may spend whole days in the tobacco plantations, which can be very bad for the child. There are cases of children giving up school through lack of clothing or school necessities and not receiving an education.

C. The right to life, survival and development (art. 6)

82. According to the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic, every citizen has the right to life and freedom of personal development.

83. The National Health Act of the Kyrgyz Republic establishes the general legal, economic and social principles of national health care and the constitutional right of citizens to health care and the free use of the network of State health care institutions.

84. Under the health care legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic, maternity institutions may interrupt pregnancy in the early stages up to 12 weeks (up to 5 weeks - mini-abortion) and after that on medical or social grounds. Women from poor families (students, women with many children), together with minors and women suffering from tuberculosis or cancer, can obtain abortions free of charge.

85. There are numerous social and economic reasons for the high level of infant mortality as compared with the developed countries. These include anaemia in pregnant and nursing mothers and the lack of breast milk and substitutes. The high frequency of births among many women (32 per cent) is associated with the birth of obviously weak and sickly children who have difficulty in adapting in the postnatal period and thus constitute a high-risk group.

86. In a development of the single low-income benefit payment system in effect since 1 January 1995, the practice of taking into account the per capita average of the combined family income has been further refined in order to ensure that the funds spent by the State on supporting poor families and individuals are received only by those who really need them. Special attention has been paid to strengthening the targeting principles in connection with the reform of the social security network within the context of a World Bank project. As a result of this careful approach to the allocation of these benefits, on 1 October 1997 out of the 745,200 people receiving them 719,500 or 96 per cent of the total were children under 16, while 15,100 of the recipients (2 per cent) were students (between 16 and 21).

D. Respect for the views of the child (art. 12)

87. The Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic requires the citizen to respect the rights, freedoms, honour and dignity of others, including children. Everyone in the Kyrgyz Republic has the right to free expression and the dissemination of his or her thoughts, ideas and opinions.

88. The Education Act stresses the humanistic nature of education, the free development of the personality of the child, and the child's ability to form and express views freely, as confirmed by judicial practice.

89. The Marriage and Family Code takes into account the opinion of the child in connection with changes of name, the determination of paternity, and adoption or the termination of adoption, provided the child has reached the age of 10 years.

V. CIVIL RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS (arts. 7, 8, 13-17 and 37 (a))

A. Name and nationality (art. 7)

90. Questions of citizenship are dealt with in the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic and other enactments. Thus, the Citizenship Act, adopted on 18 December 1993, lays down detailed rules concerning the citizenship of children and the procedure for acquiring and changing citizenship, with allowance for the opinion of the minor.

91. A child whose parents are citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic at the time of his or her birth is a citizen of the Kyrgyz Republic irrespective of his or her place of birth.

92. A child is a citizen of the Kyrgyz Republic:

- if, the parents each having different citizenship, at the time of the birth of the child within the territory of the Kyrgyz Republic the father was a citizen of the Kyrgyz Republic and the other parent a foreign citizen or stateless;
- if it was born outside the Kyrgyz Republic, but the father was a citizen of the Kyrgyz Republic and at that time had a permanent place of residence within the territory of the Kyrgyz Republic;
- if it is present in the territory of the Kyrgyz Republic and both parents are unknown;
- if at the time of birth one of the parents was a citizen of the Kyrgyz Republic and the other is unknown, irrespective of the place of birth;
- if a citizen of the Kyrgyz Republic is recognized as the father, the mother is stateless, and the child is under the age of 14, irrespective of the place of birth.

93. The citizenship of a child born outside the Kyrgyz Republic of parents living outside the Kyrgyz Republic and each having different citizenship, one of whom at the time of the child's birth is a citizen of the Kyrgyz Republic and the other a foreign citizen, is determined as agreed by the parents in writing.

94. When the parents change their citizenship and, moreover, on adoption, the citizenship of a child aged from 14 to 16 may be changed only with the consent of the child.

95. Under the Marriage and Family Code, the given name of a child is determined by agreement between the parents. The family name of a child is determined by the family name of the parents or in accordance with national custom.

96. According to Kyrgyz national custom, the family name of children is determined by the given name of the father with the addition of the words uulu or tegin for boys or kyzy for girls or without any addition, by writing the child's own given name followed by that of the father. Children are not given patronymics.

97. Where paternity has not been established, the family name of the child is determined by that of the mother.

98. Where the family name of the child is determined by that of the parents and the parents have different family names, the child is given that of the father or the mother as agreed between the parents or, in the event of their being unable to agree, by decision of the child welfare authority. The patronymic is based on the given name of the father or, where paternity has not been established, on the given name of the person registered as the father of the child.

99. The ending of the parents' marriage does not entail a change of family name for the child.

B. Preservation of identity (art. 8)

100. The Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic establishes that everyone (including a child) has the right to life, physical and moral inviolability, personal freedom and security, freedom of personal development, freedom and confidentiality of correspondence, dignity, freedom of private life and personal and family privacy, and confidentiality of postal, telephone and telegraphic communications. It is also stated that the basic rights and freedoms belong to everyone from birth and are recognized as absolute, inalienable and protected by law and the courts from violation by anyone whatsoever.

101. Under the Civil Code of the Kyrgyz Republic, intangible goods such as life and health, personal dignity, inviolability of the person, honour and good name, business reputation, inviolability of private life, and personal and family confidentiality are protected by law.

102. The draft Law of the Kyrgyz Republic on the defence and protection of the interests of minors makes it clear that the State will protect the constitutional rights of the child to inviolability of its person and preservation of identity (including citizenship, name, family relations, sex, nationality and native language), as well as to honour and dignity, freedom of conscience and religion, an upbringing, education and health, and other personal and property rights.

C. Freedom of expression (art. 13)

103. The child's right to freedom of expression is established by the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic which clearly states that everyone in the Kyrgyz Republic has the right to free expression and dissemination of his or her thoughts, ideas and opinions, freedom of literary, artistic, scientific and technical creation, and freedom to publish, transmit and disseminate information. This provision of the Constitution is developed in the Mass Media, Freedom of Religion and Religious Organizations, and Education Acts.

104. One way in which freedom of expression is actively promoted is the creative participation by children in the production of their own mass media, which is particularly widespread in the schools. Unfortunately, these progressive trends in the field of communications still lack a proper legal basis and the necessary financial resources.

D. Freedom of thought, conscience and religion (art. 14)

105. The right of citizens freely to express and disseminate their thoughts, ideas and opinions and to freedom of religion, spiritual freedom and freedom of worship is widely reflected in the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic and in the Freedom of Religion and Religious Organizations Act.

106. The freedom of religion guaranteed by the Constitution includes the right of every citizen freely and independently to determine his or her attitude to religion, to profess, individually or together with others, any religion or none, and to change religious beliefs, as well as to express and disseminate beliefs associated with attitudes to religion.

107. By mutual agreement, parents and those in loco parentis may bring up their own children in accordance with their own attitude to religion.

108. No coercion is permitted in connection with the determination by a citizen of his or her attitude to religion, the profession of or refusal to profess a religion, or participation in religious services, religious rites and ceremonies or religious education. The Penal Code of the Kyrgyz Republic specifies penalties for violating the person or the rights of a citizen under the pretext of performing religious ceremonies, for preventing the performance of religious ceremonies and for forcing someone to carry out religious ceremonies.

109. The State is kept separate from religion and the schools from religious organizations.

E. Freedom of association and of peaceful assembly (art. 15)

110. The Constitution provides for everyone in the Kyrgyz Republic to have the right to freedom of assembly, to associate peacefully, without weapons, and freely to hold meetings and demonstrations.

111. A group formed voluntarily through the free expression of their will by citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic joining together on the basis of a community of interests, goals and principles is an association within the meaning of the

Associations Act. Youth and children's organizations qualify as associations. The Act requires the State to provide material and financial support for youth and children's organizations, accord them a preferential tax regime, and grant children's organizations the right to use school premises, external (out-of-school) establishments, clubs, cultural centres, and sports and other facilities free of charge or on easy terms.

112. It is forbidden to set up a political or religious party in an educational institution.

113. In the schools, apart from the traditional school council, which includes children as well as representatives of the teachers, the parents and the community, there are new forms of democratic self-government: Manas, Semetei, Seitek, approved by the Decision of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic of 23 December 1996 on the work of the Osh Oblast State Administration on the education of the rising generation in the spirit of the teachings of the epic Manas. Various children's organizations of the legal, environmental and scout type, among others, are also in process of being formed. In the universities there are student councils, scientific societies, and community councils.

F. Protection of privacy (art. 16)

114. Under the Civil Code of the Kyrgyz Republic, life and health, personal dignity, the inviolability of the person, honour and good name, business reputation, inviolability of private life, personal and family confidentiality, freedom of movement, choice of place of residence and abode, and other intangible goods are protected by law. The Code also specifies that personal non-property rights are exercised and protected in accordance with the law.

115. The new Penal Code of the Kyrgyz Republic extends criminal liability for the violation of privacy. Thus:

(a) Unlawful assembly for the purpose of disseminating information about a person's private life constituting the personal or family secret of another, without his or her consent, or disseminating such information in a public speech or public production or in the mass media to the detriment of the rights and lawful interests of the victim is punishable by a fine equivalent to 50 times the minimum monthly wage;

(b) Violating the confidentiality of the correspondence, telephone conversations or postal, telegraphic or other communications of citizens is punishable by a fine equivalent to 50 to 100 times the minimum monthly wage;

(c) The same offence committed by someone using his official position or special technical means intended for obtaining information secretly is punishable by a fine equivalent to 100 to 300 times the minimum monthly wage or by deprivation of the right to occupy certain positions or to engage in certain activities for a period of up to 5 years or by up to 3 months' imprisonment.

G. Access to appropriate information (art. 17)

116. According to the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic, culture, art, literature, science and the mass media are free. The State protects historical monuments, fosters and provides the necessary conditions for the development of literature, art, science, the mass media and sports, and takes steps to ensure access for children to museums, cinemas and stadia.

117. The Mass Media Act of 1992 establishes the general legal, economic and social principles of organization of communication through the mass media and regulates their relations with the authorities, associations, enterprises, organizations and citizens. Provision is made for measures to expand and democratize publishing and to satisfy the reading interests of all sections of society. It is forbidden to make public any information about a juvenile offender without the consent of his or her legal representative. Parliament is currently debating a new mass media bill which also addresses the question of access for children and adolescents to appropriate information.

118. The Mass Media Act of 1992 specifies that the following shall not be permitted in the mass media:

- propaganda on behalf of war, violence or cruelty, ethnic or religious exclusivity or intolerance of other peoples and ethnic groups;
- insults to national honour;
- insults to the religious feelings of believers;
- dissemination of pornography;
- besmirchment of a person's honour and dignity.

The existing legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic establishes criminal and administrative liability for breaches of these rules.

119. The Republic's financial difficulties have affected book-publishing. Fewer art and popular science books for children and young people and fewer school textbooks and teaching methodology manuals have been published and their prices have risen. The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic has taken steps to raise funds from sponsors, the publishers themselves and foreign organizations in order to meet the textbook requirements of the general education system. In 1996-1997 alone, funds provided by UNESCO and the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) were used to publish 23 textbook titles in editions of more than 1.25 million copies, and OSCE funds are being used to prepare for publication 2 textbook titles in editions of 5,000 copies each. In 1998, the proceeds of Asian Development Bank loans and a Russian credit facility will be channeled into textbook publishing and the purchase of textbooks from CIS publishers.

H. The right not to be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (art. 37 (a))

120. According to the education services, the Office of the Procurator and the Ministry of Internal Affairs, various instances of cruelty to children are being reported. Inappropriate methods of bringing up children and degrading treatment, including mental cruelty and physical violence, are encountered in the family, in the schools and in other institutions for children. In these cases the children sometimes become the victims of various kinds of criminal offence.

121. According to the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic, "No one may be subjected to torture, ill-treatment or inhuman degrading punishment". The accession of the Kyrgyz Republic to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and the Additional Protocols I and II thereto in 1992 and to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment in 1996 means that children are protected from inhuman treatment at the international level, both during periods of armed conflict and in time of peace.

122. The criminal law of the Kyrgyz Republic makes beating and torturing children indictable offences. For other forms of cruelty to children the law provides for disciplinary action against the culprits.

123. In the new Penal Code of the Kyrgyz Republic it is stipulated that the death penalty may be imposed as an exceptional measure of punishment only for especially grave offences involving the taking of life. The death penalty is not applied to minors or women. The Penal Code does not provide for the institution of life imprisonment as a form of punishment.

124. The physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of children who have been subjected to ill-treatment are dealt with on a case-by-case basis by the health care organizations, the departments of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the education services, the parents and the child welfare authorities.

125. The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture of the Kyrgyz Republic and the Commissions for Minors of the State administrations perform coordinating and monitoring functions in relation to the upbringing and protection of the rights of children and adolescents.

VI. FAMILY ENVIRONMENT AND ALTERNATIVE CARE

A. Parental guidance (art. 5)

126. According to the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic, the care of children and their upbringing are the natural right and civic duty of the parents.

127. Under the Marriage and Family Code, the reciprocal rights and duties of parents and children are based on the origin of the child, attested in accordance with the procedure established by law. In guaranteeing the right of parents to bring up their children, the Code reinforces the principle that

responsibility for protecting the rights and interests of minors lies with their parents. The parents are the legal representatives of their children and are required to defend their rights and interests in dealings with any institution, including a court of law. If they live apart, they are entitled to maintain contact with the children and to participate in their upbringing. Parents may demand the return of the children from anyone holding them without legal justification or court authorization.

128. The parents' rights can be restricted only by a court order or by a decision of a child welfare authority on grounds strictly defined by law.

B. Parental responsibilities (art. 18, paras. 1-2)

129. The responsibility of parents for bringing up their children is established by the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic, the marriage and family legislation, the Administrative and Penal Codes, the education and health legislation, and the Regulations on Commissions for Minors. The law of the Kyrgyz Republic entitles children to apply to child welfare authorities for protection if their parents abuse their parental rights. The principle that parents are jointly and severally responsible for the upbringing and development of their children has been introduced. Parents are required to provide for the physical and moral development and the education of their children and to protect their rights and interests. Both parents are equally responsible for their children even if the marriage has ended or they have been deprived of their parental rights. Parental rights may not be exercised in a manner contrary to the interests of the child. The parents' obligations to provide for their children's maintenance have been defined.

130. The Civil Code makes parents liable for damage caused by minors, unless it can be shown that the damage was not the fault of their child. Parents, adoptive parents and guardians are materially liable for the transactions of a minor under the age of 14.

131. The Penal Code does not make the parents liable for offences committed by their children.

132. It should be noted that because of budget constraints the State is unable fully to provide the support needed by parents and guardians in order to fulfil their obligations.

C. Separation from parents (art. 9)

133. The domestic law of the Kyrgyz Republic includes measures to prevent the separation of children from their parents without special reason. This is mainly ensured by the priority right of the parents to bring up their children, even when the marriage has been ended.

134. The Marriage and Family Code provides for penalties such as deprivation of parental rights for parents who fail to perform their duties, abuse their rights or engage in amoral or antisocial behaviour. In 1996, a total of 36 parents were deprived of their parental rights on these grounds.

135. When it is dangerous to leave the child with the parents, the court may decide to remove the child and hand it over to the child welfare authorities, irrespective of the deprivation of parental rights. In exceptional cases, where there is a direct threat to the life or health of the child, the authorities may decide on the immediate temporary removal of the child from the parents or other persons in whose charge it effectively may be.

136. Parents deprived of their parental rights may be allowed to have contacts with their children provided such encounters do not have a harmful effect on the child. The law of the Kyrgyz Republic requires the competent authorities to consider all such questions strictly in the light of the interests of the child.

137. Where it is not possible for children to be always with their parents, the criminal law of the Kyrgyz Republic and various industry-specific regulations require arrangements to be made for them to see each other and maintain family ties.

138. Female convicts who are pregnant or caring for children under three years of age are sent to serve their sentence in a corrective labour institution with childcare facilities.

139. The practical problem of enabling convicted adolescents to serve their sentence closer to where their parents live remains unsolved. The draft new Penal Administration Code in preparation provides for adolescents to serve their sentence closer to home.

D. Family reunification (art. 10)

140. The domestic legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic does not place any restrictions on the possibility of the reunification of family members living either within the country or in other States.

141. The Marriage and Family Code of the Kyrgyz Republic provides for the restoration of parental rights to the parents if the interests of the children so require, provided the children have not been adopted. Parental rights may be restored to the parents if their behaviour and way of life have changed and they are in a position to bring up and provide for the children. Parental rights may be restored only under a judicial procedure.

142. When an adopted child has reached the age of 10, adoption may be terminated at the request of the parents and with the consent of the child.

143. When released from places of detention, minors are returned to their parents or those *in loco parentis*.

E. Illicit transfer and non-return (art. 11)

144. The domestic legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic does not as yet include any provisions for preventing the illicit transfer and non-return of children from abroad. In accordance with international humanitarian law, since 1992 the internment and evacuation of children in time of war have been exceptional measures justified only by considerations of safety.

145. The Penal Code of the Kyrgyz Republic provides penalties for abducting someone else's child, for substituting a child for gain or for personal motives and for taking a person hostage.

F. Recovery of maintenance for the child (art. 27, para. 4)

146. In article 120 of the Penal Code of the Kyrgyz Republic it is stipulated that the wilful evasion by the parents of the payment of court-ordered maintenance for minor children or dependent children unable to work is punishable by deprivation of liberty for up to 2 years or corrective labour for the same period.

147. In the event of loss of the breadwinner, under the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic the children are guaranteed social security at the expense of the State. In this case the child receives an allowance of 30 per cent of the wage of the breadwinner, but not less than 50 per cent of the lowest old-age pension - 200 som. This year (1997), 1,360 children who have lost the breadwinner have been granted allowances. The average amount of the allowance is 72.2 som. In the Kyrgyz Republic there are more than 40,000 children receiving allowances for loss of breadwinner. These include children under 16 and also children attending vocational training and specialized secondary schools up to the age of 21.

G. Children deprived of a family environment (art. 20)

148. Under the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic, the State will provide for the maintenance, upbringing and education of orphans and children deprived of parental support. Moreover, special care for children and the social protection of children temporarily or permanently deprived of a family environment are guaranteed by the Marriage and Family Code of the Kyrgyz Republic and other enactments.

149. The legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic provides for a child that has been temporarily or permanently deprived of its family environment or that cannot, in its own best interests, be allowed to remain in that environment to be placed in guardianship, offered for adoption or admitted to a boarding institution.

150. In the Kyrgyz Republic, the number of children deprived of parental support is increasing from year to year. Thus, in 1996 there were 6,056 children placed in guardianship or curatorship as compared with 5,715 in 1995 (see annex I, table 14).

151. Where necessary and if there is no possibility of placing orphans and children deprived of parental care with a family, measures are taken to create the necessary conditions in children's boarding institutions to ensure their full physical, intellectual and spiritual development. In the Kyrgyz Republic there are 6 children's homes and 4 boarding schools for children deprived of parental care with a total complement of 1,238 children, of which 824 or 79.4 per cent have parents but have been deprived of parental care, and 214 or 20.6 per cent are orphans whose parents have died.

152. The money allowed for feeding orphans, corresponding to the allowance in kind, is 27.50 som per child. However, only 9 som, i.e. less than half, is financed from the national budget, which is not enough to nourish the children properly. Moreover, in the Panfil and Chui-Tokmok boarding schools for orphans and children deprived of parental care the allowance is 4-5 som per day per pupil which, with a loaf of bread costing 3.5 som, means that the children are half-starved.

153. The children's homes and orphanage schools are overcrowded. In 1996-1997, three boarding schools for orphans and children deprived of parental care were opened in the Republic. However, there is an acute problem with regard to the opening of children's homes in Talas and Naryn oblasts. Unfortunately, in view of the serious financial and material situation in the institutions the requirements with respect to the upkeep of the children are not always met (see annex I, table 13).

154. Out of the 13 homes and boarding schools forming part of the system operated by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, 3 are intended for mentally retarded children aged from 4 to 18. These provide permanent accommodation for 370 children who receive the necessary care under medical supervision.

155. The children in these institutions are looked after completely by the State in an environment which is made as home-like as possible. Each child has the right to the living conditions it needs for its full physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.

156. The local State administrations provide additional assistance for all homes and boarding institutions. Through the education services and the commissions for minors, they also consider the problems of parental responsibility for children placed in homes and other institutions and the possibility of their contributing to the child's maintenance.

157. The birth of a disabled child places a heavy burden on the family and especially on low-income families, the number of which has been increasing sharply over the last few years as a result of the deterioration of the social situation brought about by the economic crisis. Accordingly, it is not uncommon for parents to abandon their children or send them to children's homes, without taking any further interest in their fate. International organizations such as UNICEF and UNDP are providing considerable assistance for children in the field of health care.

158. A Support for Orphans project is being successfully implemented by the Meerim International Foundation. In 1997, with the assistance and financial backing of SOS Kinderdorf-International, construction began on a family-type children's village for orphans and abandoned children in Bishkek. Through UNDP about US$ 1 million is being disbursed for the construction of a centre for neglected children. The Office of the Mayor of Bishkek has set aside a plot of land for these purposes. A stone has been erected at the site of the proposed children's village.

H. Adoption (art. 21)

159. Adoption and guardianship remain the priority means of providing for children deprived of parental care. There has been some development of family-type children's homes in which from 5 to 10 orphans are brought up. An advantage of these forms of care for children deprived of parental support is that they are raised in a family environment with excellent social adaptation to the community and to work. At present, however, family-type children's homes, being on the budget of the local State administrations, are experiencing considerable financial difficulties.

160. The Marriage and Family Code of the Kyrgyz Republic and Decision No. 825 of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, dated 13 November 1994, approving the Regulations on the adoption procedure for minors deprived of parental care establish the procedure for the adoption of children by citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic and for inter-country adoption. In 1996, 9,431 children were adopted, as compared with 8,742 in 1995.

161. The penalty under the Penal Code of the Kyrgyz Republic for breaching the confidentiality of adoption against the will of the adoptive parent is up to two years' corrective labour or a fine.

162. The Legislative Assembly of the Zhogorku Kenesh, together with the interested organs of the Republic, has prepared a draft Family Code of the Kyrgyz Republic which includes a new chapter on the foster family. This is a provision new to Kyrgyzstan family law for placing children in the care of a family on the basis of an agreement between the child welfare authorities and the foster parents. Pending the entry into force of the Family Code, the Regulations on family-type children's homes (foster families), approved by Decision of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic No. 598 of 13 December 1993, remain in effect.

163. In cases where the legal requirements and formalities have not been complied with and the child's interests have suffered, a procedure exists for annulling or terminating adoption. Adoption may be terminated or annulled only by a court order.

164. Children placed with adoptive families (together with those placed in guardianship) account for 75 to 80 per cent of the total number of children known to have been deprived of parental care. Over 50 per cent are adopted before reaching school age.

I. Abuse and neglect (art. 19), including physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration (art. 39)

165. The Kyrgyz Republic guarantees that the constitutional rights and freedoms of its citizens will be protected by the courts.

166. In the Penal Code of the Kyrgyz Republic there is an entire chapter devoted to the punishment of offences against the life, health, freedom and dignity of the person. Moreover, the Code establishes penalties for the

premeditated murder by the mother of her newborn child, evasion of the responsibility to provide for a child or make maintenance payments, and for abusing the authority of a guardian.

167. The Marriage and Family Code of the Kyrgyz Republic establishes the liability of parents and persons in loco parentis for ill-treatment, lack of care and abuse of their rights, which can lead to the deprivation of parental rights. If there is a direct threat to the life or health of the child, the child welfare authority may decide to remove the child forthwith.

168. The Civil Code of the Kyrgyz Republic requires compensation to be paid, in cash or in kind, for causing a person moral harm (physical or moral suffering).

169. The lodging of complaints is governed by the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic on the procedure for considering proposals, applications and complaints by citizens. This does not envisage any restrictions on the possibility of a complaint being lodged by a minor, either directly or through his or her representative.

170. In the Kyrgyz Republic there are State services, such as the child welfare authorities, commissions for minors, etc., which monitor the protection of children from violence, abuse and neglect. However, it should be noted that because the children, adolescents and young people know little of the law and because these services lack the resources to function effectively, children are not protected from abuse and violence as well as they should be. There is also no system of physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration. Machinery for monitoring the extent of various forms of violence and neglect in the family and in special boarding schools and correctional institutions have not been established. There is no system for giving social workers the appropriate professional training.

VII. BASIC HEALTH AND WELFARE
(arts. 6, 18.3, 23, 24, 26 and 27.1-3)

A. Children with special needs (art. 23)

171. The Kyrgyz Republic has no legislative framework to support the provision of suitable conditions for the upbringing and education of children with physical and mental disabilities. However, Decision of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic No. 555 of 21 December 1995 approving the model Regulations on special educational institutions for children and adolescents with mental or physical disabilities addresses the problem of correcting the defects and personality of the abnormal child and providing such children with free specialized medical, defectological and psychological care, basic and vocational education with subsequent placement in a job (according to their capacities), and social rehabilitation. There are 19 special schools and boarding schools in the Republic with 3,400 places for mentally or physically handicapped children.

172. According to the statistics, as of 1 January 1997, there were 9,956 disabled children in the Republic, including 1,358 suffering from infantile cerebral palsy.

173. Disabled persons receive wheelchairs and material support from local budgets, sponsors and various funds, as well as from humanitarian aid supplied to the Republic. The production of invalid chairs, including chairs designed specially for children, is now being organized on the basis of the small enterprise Baisal. In 1997, the sum of 9.3 million som was allocated for this purpose.

174. The Ak-Tilek Rehabilitation Centre, which is funded from the State budget, treats children with disturbances of the musculo-skeletal apparatus. Other initiatives of a similar nature are also being undertaken, including the rehabilitation of disabled adolescents through work. In 1998, under the Mother and Child project to be carried out jointly with the international organization France-Liberté, it is planned to create jobs for disabled children. Similar projects are also being developed with other international organizations. A comprehensive social protection programme Inva-Aid has been drawn up for 1997-1998. This will involve rehabilitating disabled persons through work and encouraging them to take up employment, as well as providing vocational training for disabled children and placing them in jobs.

175. The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic is seeking ways of improving the situation of children with mental and physical disabilities. Thus, a joint project with the international organization Save the Children (Denmark) for the period 1996-1999 has been developed and introduced. The aim of the project is to improve the conditions of the children in children's homes and special boarding schools by upgrading the facilities and improving the professional skills of the teaching staff.

B. Health and health-care services (art. 24)

176. The National Health Care Act (2 July 1992) and Decision of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic No. 340 of 29 July 1993 on measures to improve national health care establish the right of children to health care and lay down the procedure for providing children with medical attention. The provision of maternity care in the Republic, with a view to producing future generations of healthy children, is based on a widespread network of preventive and curative treatment centres and maternity homes, the payment of antenatal and postnatal maternity benefits, the prohibition of heavy labour and work under conditions harmful to health, the interruption of pregnancy during the first 26 weeks for problem families, and the supply of contraceptives to all women of child-bearing age under the Ayalzat programme. Under this programme it is also intended to solve pressing problems of maternity and childhood with allowance for demographic, medical and other aspects (see annex I, tables 21 and 22).

177. In accordance with Order No. 27 of the Ministry of Health of the Kyrgyz Republic, dated 5 August 1994, approving the procedures for the organization of the work of antenatal clinics, preventive measures are being taken to avoid complications during pregnancy and in childbirth.

178. The predominance of diseases of the respiratory organs (48 per cent), perinatal problems (22 per cent) and infectious and parasitogenic diseases (13 per cent) among the causes of death in young children has led to the development of a number of national programmes aimed at introducing simple and

effective methods that do not require complex technology or considerable expense. Thus, programmes for combating respiratory and diarrhoeal diseases in children under five, which provide for standardized schemes of treatment, and encouragement and support for breastfeeding, as recommended by WHO and UNICEF, have been introduced with the financial support of UNICEF (see annex I, tables 17, 19 and 20).

179. The Meerim Foundation is setting up a children's rehabilitation centre on the shores of Lake Issyk-Kul for the recuperation and treatment of children with broncho-pulmonary diseases, anaemia and cardiological problems.

180. In recent years, within the maternity and paediatric service large national and regional institutions provided with modern medical equipment have been brought into operation: the 300-bed national children's clinic, the 100-bed maternity home of the Kyrgyz Scientific Research Institute for Obstetrics and Paediatrics, and regional maternity homes in the Naryn, Chui and Jalal-Abad oblasts.

181. The preservation of a healthy national gene pool is the main purpose of the State programme A healthy nation. At the same time, almost every fourth girl and future mother presents anomalies in the development of the reproductive system. More than 10 per cent of mothers who die in childbirth or as a result of an abortion are young, not yet 19, and every fifth young mother is suffering from inflammatory diseases of the genitalia. The reproductive health of male children - the future fathers - has not yet received sufficient attention, although it has been reliably established that in half the cases of infertility, early miscarriages and congenital anomalies of the newborn the cause lies in the pathology of the reproductive system of the male. In this connection, a scientific centre for the study of human reproduction has been organized for the purpose of improving the reproductive health of the population.

182. Perinatal mortality remains high as a result of the acute shortage of incubators, respirators, monitors and drugs; however, measures are being taken to improve the perinatal service. Thus, perinatal centres have been set up in Bishkek and Osh and another is being built in Talas. In order to prevent hypothermia in the newborn, use has begun to be made of the "kangaroo" technique of thermal monitoring and nursing of underweight babies, at the recommendation of the organization Wellstart International (United States of America).

183. In the Republic's maternity homes and clinics, "free swaddling" is being introduced in order to eliminate the traditional practice of tight swaddling which can harm the child's health by causing stagnation effects in the lungs and the development of hypoxic states.

184. In order to promote education and services in the field of preventive medicine, State television regularly deals with questions such as the rational feeding of children and the prevention of various illnesses and broadcasts a series of programmes called "Mother's school", while public service spots are used to advise on preventing the spread of infectious diseases.

185. The Ministry of Health has drawn up a project to establish a rehabilitation centre for children under 14 suffering from broncho-pulmonary diseases utilizing the unique climatic and balneological features of Lake Issyk-Kul. The project provides for the rehabilitation of children with respiratory diseases and allergies and children who are frequently ill, i.e. the group doomed to invalidization.

186. The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic has approved a programme to combat venereal diseases, including HIV/AIDS, which among other things deals with the provision of medical care and educational work among the public, including minors. In 1997, the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic signed an agreement with the UNDP on a project to prevent AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases in the Kyrgyz Republic. Under this UNDP programme, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture are developing 16 school programmes on leading a healthy life which, among other things, deal with the prevention of HIV/AIDS and venereal diseases and family planning. A National Multisectoral Coordination Committee under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic has been set up to deal with the prevention of AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases, as approved by Decision of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic No. 507 of 1 September 1997.

187. A difficult situation has arisen with respect to the organization of child nutrition. In 1997, out of 164 children's "milk kitchens" only 30 were functioning, mainly due to the break-up of farms and the lack of funds to buy the raw milk. Child nutrition policy has a twofold objective, namely, while actively encouraging breastfeeding to bring back into operation the children's "milk kitchens" previously closed.

188. Iron-deficiency anaemia, both among pregnant women and nursing mothers and among children, especially during the first two years of life, remains a pressing problem. In the southern regions of the country, up to 80 per cent of pregnant women are affected, which is leading to their giving birth to sickly, weak and underweight children who then constitute a group at high risk of disease and death.

189. In order to reduce susceptibility to iron-deficiency diseases, three flour mills have begun supplementing their flour with iron. In order to prevent anaemia among children, pregnant women and nursing mothers, an efficient new scheme for the weekly distribution of iron preparations, recommended by WHO and UNICEF and having practically no side effects, is being introduced; the iron preparations are being purchased with UNICEF funds.

190. The Kyrgyz Republic is participating in international cooperation in the field of health care for children and mothers within the context of the United Nations system (WHO, UNICEF, etc.). In view of the serious economic situation of the health-care sector, the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic and the Ministry of Health are seeking international investment aimed at improving the health care available to children.

191. Since 1996, in order to reduce child mortality, the TsARAK programme has been operating in Chui oblast with financial support from the WHO Regional Office for Europe; in Osh oblast a joint programme to reduce mortality among children under the age of five due to diarrhoeal diseases has been developed

with financing from the international organization BASICS; medical equipment for maternity homes and children's hospitals in the Issyk-Kul and Naryn oblasts has been received under the United States programme entitled "From heart to heart", and under the intergovernmental agreement between Kyrgyzstan and Japan the newly opened national children's clinic has been provided with modern Japanese equipment, including a nuclear magnetic tomograph.

192. In implementation of the Presidential Decree of 22 November 1996 on measures to introduce compulsory medical insurance in the Kyrgyz Republic and Decision of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic No. 18 of 14 January 1997 on questions concerning the introduction of compulsory medical insurance in the Kyrgyz Republic, as well as for the purpose of coordinating the national reform of the State social insurance system being carried out in accordance with World Bank projects and the EU programme Technical Assistance for the Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS) for the Social Fund of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic entitled "Reform of social insurance", the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic has adopted Special Decision No. 418 of 16 July 1997 providing for compulsory medical insurance as an integral part of the State social insurance system. The scope of remunerated medical services has been extended, and family doctors are being introduced to the practice of providing primary health care. Children under the age of three are being supplied with free medicines. Children suffering from chronic diseases are also receiving free medicines and sanatorium and spa treatment, on the basis of a list of diseases established by the Ministry of Health.

193. Each year, between 180,000 and 200,000 children fall ill with infectious and parasitogenic diseases (acute intestinal and respiratory infections, viral hepatitis). The epidemiological situation with respect to the number of cases of meningococcal infection, brucellosis and tuberculosis is becoming more difficult. During the 1994-1995 epidemic, 400 children came down with diphtheria. During the meningococcal infection epidemic, 228 cases of the disease were recorded in 1995 and 378 in 1996, and among these owing to the acute shortage of the necessary drugs between 10 and 25 per cent of the children died. In 1994, the Ministry of Health established an immunization and prevention centre for controllable infectious diseases (tetanus, measles, diphtheria, whooping cough, poliomyelitis, mumps) which has organized an efficient system for the immunization of children in accordance with a new schedule. The centre is being aided by the international organizations UNICEF, DANIDA, UNDP and BASICS which are supplying vaccines and cold storage facilities. In the last three years there has been a campaign of mass immunization of children against poliomyelitis (under the WHO immunization programme to eliminate poliomyelitis by the year 2000). Thanks to this, in recent years no cases of polio or tetanus have been recorded and there has been a reduction in the number of cases of measles and whooping cough.

194. A draft Law of the Kyrgyz Republic on drinking water, a national drinking water programme and a national plan of action on environmental hygiene have been drawn up in order to combat the increase in the number of cases of typhoid and intestinal infections and to clean up the environment. Thanks to the efforts made, infantile mortality has tended to stabilize, falling from 31.9 per 1,000 live births in 1993 to 26.3 per 1,000 in 1997 (preliminary data).

195. There is concern about the spread of tuberculosis, including among children under 14 and adolescents. The causes of the increase in tuberculosis, which has deep social roots, are a steep fall in the standard of living, migration, overcrowding, poor housing, and the unavoidable deterioration in the funding of the health-care institutions, which has led to a significant decline in the quantity and quality of mass anti-tuberculosis preventive measures. In this connection, the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic has adopted Decision No. 531 of 15 December 1995, the National Tuberculosis Programme, whose aim is to stabilize the incidence of and the number of deaths from this disease by the year 2000 and then reduce them.

C. Social security and childcare services and facilities (arts. 26 and 18)

196. The social security of orphans and children deprived of parental care is guaranteed by the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Marriage and Family Code of the Kyrgyz Republic and other enactments, which provide for the education, maintenance and upbringing of such children. In particular, the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic has adopted decisions approving model Regulations on special educational institutions for children and adolescents with mental or physical disabilities and model Regulations on State general-education boarding schools for orphans and children deprived of parental care (21 December 1995), on the opening of a mixed-type children's home in the Issyk-Kul oblast (17 January 1996), etc.

197. The problem of providing children with pre-school facilities has become more acute. On 1 January 1997, there were 449 pre-school establishments attended by 47,300 children operating in the Kyrgyz Republic. During the last 5 years the number of establishments has fallen by two thirds. On account of the high fees (up by 140 per cent), many families are giving up using kindergartens, large numbers of which have been leased or sold.

D. Standard of living (art. 27)

198. The right of every child to living conditions that permit its all-round development and the responsibility of the child's parents or those in loco parentis and the State for ensuring the enjoyment of those rights are established in numerous legal instruments, among them the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Marriage and Family Code of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Housing Code of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Penal Code of the Kyrgyz Republic, etc. Additional guarantees are provided in presidential decrees and government decisions.

199. With the liberalization of prices and the transition to a market economy, measures to protect low-income families with children have acquired a special urgency. It is envisaged that the benefits to be provided at the national level might be supplemented by the regions and individual enterprises and organizations where broader criteria for the granting of benefits might also be applied.

200. For the purpose of restoring and securing a child's essential material well-being, the Marriage and Family Code of the Kyrgyz Republic specifies the amounts of maintenance payable for minor children and the procedures for

recovering such amounts from the parents. The amounts, recoverable by court order, are as follows: a quarter of the parents' earnings (income) in the case of one child, a third in the case of two children; and a half if there are three or more children, but no less than one quarter of the established minimum wage per child (Marriage and Family Code of the Kyrgyz Republic, art. 94). However, given the country's present serious economic situation and the level of unemployment, these requirements with respect to children are not always being met which, of course, has repercussions on their standard of living.

201. In order to maintain the standard of living of the country's children, arrangements have been made for the distribution of humanitarian aid supplied by international organizations such as UNICEF, International Mercy Corps, Counterpart Fund, Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), France Liberté, International Red Cross, etc. (food, clothing and other aid). The Children's Fund of the Kyrgyz Republic is implementing the Social Assistance Information System (SPIN) project whose aim is to gather and disseminate information about humanitarian aid and the charitable activities of the organizations providing assistance for the children of Kyrgyzstan and to study the situation of children in the Republic.

VIII. EDUCATION, LEISURE AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

A. Education, including vocational training and guidance (art. 28)

202. The Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic and other enactments provide comprehensive coverage of rights in the field of education. The Kyrgyz legislation, especially since the adoption of the Education Act in 1992, basically conforms to international standards, including the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Education Act declares education to be a priority within the system of social relations and a necessary condition for the stable development of the Republic. Under the Act, all citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic have equal rights to education irrespective of gender, nationality, language, social or property status, type and nature of employment, religion, political convictions and other circumstances.

203. The year 1996 was proclaimed Education Year in the Kyrgyz Republic. The national programmes Bilim (Knowledge) for the period 1996-2000 and Human Resources for the Twenty-first Century are being implemented, together with the Education through Culture 1995-2000 scheme. These programmes reflect State policy in the field of education whose ultimate objective is to make the Kyrgyzstan of the twenty-first century an open society of highly educated citizens. The Bilim programme is based on the reform of the form and content of education to align them on international standards, in particular by:

- improving the legislative and regulatory framework;
- introducing new technologies and educational standards, computerizing education, and raising its quality and efficiency;
- improving the supply of materials and equipment and the financing of education.

204. The aim of the programme Human Resources for the Twenty-first Century is to adapt the population to the new socio-economic conditions through education, in particular training received abroad, new teaching technologies and the expansion of international cooperation. Each year, under this programme more than 300 young Kyrgyz go to study in China, the United States, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Russian Federation and elsewhere.

205. Education within the State system of the Kyrgyz Republic is universal and free. State educational standards, which all types of schools must meet, have been established for all levels of education. An adequate educational level is being maintained by 1,910 general secondary schools with 1,039,900 pupils. Thus, 99.5 per cent of all school-age children and adolescents in the Kyrgyz Republic are covered by compulsory education. In the Education Act of the Kyrgyz Republic provision was made for the first time for the possibility of opening non-State (private) schools. There are now 2,600 pupils being educated in schools of this type (see annex I, tables 6, 11 and 12).

206. Access to all forms of education is guaranteed by the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic and is one of the priorities of State policy in the field, as confirmed by the State's education budget. At the same time, the State is short of the resources it needs to keep the schools fully funded. Accordingly, families are having to spend more on their children's education. The adoption of the national strategy for stable human development and the village development programme will help to solve these problems.

207. The Kyrgyz Republic has a progressive, continuous and multi-stage system of education and training (pre-school, elementary school, external, secondary, special, vocational and higher). External children's institutions of a new type are being developed:

- the Children's Educational Museum of the Meerim Foundation (Bishkek), a centre for teaching children new technologies and introducing them to world educational and scientific programmes, as well as educating them through the world of art;

- children's educational centres for ensuring equal opportunities for children from all parts of the Republic and integrating them into world educational programmes. These centres, which are being established at three levels (oblast and raion centres and centres in rural schools in remote areas), will make possible more effective computer, environmental and language training and facilitate the moral and aesthetic education of children and young people.

208. The main language of instruction is the State language, namely Kyrgyz. The State Language Act of the Kyrgyz Republic guarantees the rights of children belonging to ethnic and linguistic minorities to receive education and information in their native tongue. In the Kyrgyz Republic there are schools in which the children are taught in Russian, Uzbek and Tajik. Small ethnic groups living in the Kyrgyz Republic study their native language (Dungan, Uigur, German, Turkish, etc.). The total number of children

studying foreign languages (English, French and German) is increasing. Thus, 71 per cent of pupils studied foreign languages in 1992, 74.7 per cent in 1994 and 79 per cent in 1996. The study of oriental languages (Arabic, Japanese and Chinese) has become widespread. At the beginning of the 1996/97 academic year there were over 360 such groups with more than 5,000 students. The Republic has 123 schools with Russian, 134 with Uzbek and 2 with Tajik as the language of instruction, as well as 385 with a language mix (see annex I, tables 7 and 8).

209. Within the general school system there are 19 special schools for children with physical or mental disabilities and integration training is provided for disabled children (see annex I, table 9). Non-State forms of instruction have begun to be developed for disabled children, including those who have not previously received any education. The humanitarian rehabilitation centre Umut (Hope), financed with charity funds from Germany, has been opened and is operating successfully.

210. The quality of the teaching has been adversely affected by the exodus of teachers into the commercial sector, sharp cuts in teaching staff, the complete elimination of the teaching methodology service, increases in class sizes (25 pupils on average and 35-40 in the cities of Bishkek and Osh), and the shortage of textbooks and teaching aids. Among other things, the State is doing its utmost to supply the general schools with highly qualified teaching staff, while at the same time sending teachers on short and long training and re-training courses to improve their qualifications and encouraging them to take part in seminars.

B. Aims of education (art. 29)

211. As spelled out in the Education Act, the national programmes Bilim, Human Resources for the Twenty-first Century and Mandaniyat, the Education through Culture scheme, and other instruments, State policy is aimed first at fully satisfying the diverse educational interests and needs of the child and developing its personality, talents, and mental and physical abilities.

212. In order to take the different needs and abilities of the students into account the Kyrgyz Republic has established a diversified education system with a range of functions, forms of ownership and activities: ordinary schools (1,910), including schools providing for the in-depth study of individual subjects (278), high schools or gymnasia (66), including the specialized National Computer High School, established in 1997, lycées (41), boarding schools for children with special educational needs (1), special schools for children with mental or physical disabilities (19) (see annex I, table 6).

213. To ensure an individual approach, new teaching standards have been adopted, alternative textbooks and flexible curricula are being introduced, innovative programmes are being encouraged, optional courses arranged and non-traditional educational institutions opened. Gifted children can compete for places in special music, art and sports schools.

214. There are 37 institutions of higher education training specialists in 43 disciplines. Non-traditional institutions have been set up, such as the

American University in Kyrgyzstan, the International University of Kyrgyzstan, the Kyrgyz-Turkish University, and the Kyrgyz-Uzbek University. The process of computerization and technical re-equipment of the higher education establishments is under way and almost all have been connected to the Internet.

215. The higher education programme provides training for specialists in 43 disciplines. There are 15 establishments offering a post-graduate degree and 3 in which it is possible to obtain a doctorate. The process of progressive computerization and technical re-equipment of the schools, vocational training establishments and universities has begun.

216. The vocational training system, flexibly adapting to the structural transformation of the economy, is now engaged in a process of reform. One of the main reforms will be the transformation of the system through investment projects. Thus, vocational training is currently benefiting from a World Bank loan project and free technical assistance from Germany and Turkey. A project with the Asian Development Bank is planned for the near future.

217. In order to achieve social justice for all young people, over 40 trade schools have been converted into vocational lycées where, at the same time as being taught a trade, the students receive a general secondary education. Multi-level training complexes (trade school/colleges) are being established to raise teaching standards and promote the introduction of advanced teaching technologies.

218. The individualization of instruction and working with each student are becoming increasingly important in the vocational training schools. Accordingly, the approaches to curriculum planning and course programming for specific trades and professions and the organization of the educational process are being re-examined. In order to improve the ability of young people to compete on the labour market, dozens of new market-related courses have been devised and introduced. During the first 9 months of 1997, about 3,000 unemployed people, mainly teenagers with no work experience, underwent retraining in the vocational training system.

219. The second aim of State policy is nurturing respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and for the principles proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations is one of the foundations of State policy in the field of education. At government department level and among the non-governmental organizations work is being done on informing the public, including children, about the contents of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Talent Support Fund, with the assistance of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic and financing from UNICEF and Save the Children Fund (UK), has produced a series of informational and educational television programmes for children called Rights of the Child in Kyrgyzstan.

220. The third aim is educating children to respect their parents, their cultural identity, native language and national values and civilizations other than their own through the introduction into the schools of new subjects: Yiman sabagy (morality and traditional ethics), Manas sabagy (cultural heritage), Meken taanuu (knowledge of the native land), citizenship, etc. Children's festivals, competitions, exhibitions and other events are regularly

organized within the context of the days designated for celebrating the culture of the peoples who live within the territory of the Kyrgyz Republic.

221. The fourth aim is preparing the child for an intelligent life in a free society in a spirit of world understanding, tolerance and equality of rights for men and women, and nurturing in the child a feeling of respect for different groups, including religious, ethnic and national groups. The children's and youth organizations Manas, Semetei and Seitek, whose basic principles are the seven precepts of Manas, have been called upon to instil these qualities. Seminars on questions of tolerance have been held in the country's schools. Brochures and practical recommendations for teachers and other literature on tolerance issues are being published. The children themselves are taking part in the writing of stories about tolerance.

222. There is no discrimination on grounds of nationality, religion or sex. Other than in certain special cases, boys and girls are taught in mixed classes.

223. Increased attention is being paid to questions of environmental education. In the senior classes of the general schools a course on geo-ecology has been introduced. The number of informal environmental organizations and movements, including those for children, is increasing. This process was assisted by the signing in 1995, within the framework of the Globe programme, of a cooperation agreement between Kyrgyzstan and the United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration - World Nature Conservation Programme, one of the main objectives of which is the environmental education of schoolchildren and the establishment of school environmental centres throughout Kyrgyzstan.

224. Anyone with the necessary educational and pedagogical qualifications has the right to teach. In the Kyrgyz Republic, 71 per cent of teachers have received a higher education and 23 per cent a specialized secondary education. On the basis of proficiency tests, 13,700 teachers were placed in the higher and 22,300 in the first category. The demands of the regional education authorities for teachers have been 90 per cent satisfied. Highly qualified teachers are allowed to choose their own form and method of instruction. The State grants special and honorary titles and makes State awards for outstanding services to persons employed in the education system.

225. The educational institutions are legal entities whose activities are governed by the Education Act of the Kyrgyz Republic, other enactments of the Republic and the corresponding regulations and instructions. Educational institutions may form associations, unions, and other joint bodies. Supervision of the educational institutions is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection.

C. Leisure, recreation and cultural activities (art. 31)

226. The right of the child to rest and leisure is ensured by the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic and the Education Act, as well as in the national programmes Bilim and Madaniyat and other enactments.

227. One of the objectives of the Education through Culture scheme for 1995-2000, approved by Decision of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic No. 66 of 9 March 1995, is to create suitable conditions for the development and moulding of individuals who combine a high level of education with familiarity with the fundamentals of not only national but also world culture. The implementation of the scheme will make a concrete contribution to the solution of the multifaceted problem of shaping a State ideology. Between 1995 and 2000, the priority tasks of the transitional period of reorientation of education on the basis of national and world culture should be completed.

228. The network of external (out-of-school) institutions (see annex I, table 10) is being preserved. There are 99,100 children using these institutions, which is less than 10 per cent of the total number of students. An art centre, the Seitek centre for children and youth, the Perishte children's bank and the Zhashtyk sports and health centre have been established at national level. Hobby workshops and interest groups paid for from local budgets are operating in the community. The budget deficit which is leading to cutbacks in the number of organizers in the schools and external institutions and the transfer of educational services from a free to a paying basis are making leisure facilities, study groups and clubs less accessible to children. Business sponsorship, funds, grants, contract payments, etc. are additional sources of financing. The network consisting of State children's theatres and puppet theatres, the young people's theatre, the circus, museums, libraries and parks is being extensively used to broaden the students' aesthetic experience.

229. The Kyrgyz Republic is a multinational State which means that a priority task of education is to instil in the students a culture of interethnic relations. The achievement of this objective depends on the development and introduction into educational practice of the principles of area studies and, in particular, ethno-cultural studies, as developed by Kyrgyz humanists, which presupposes not only the introduction of the students to culture but more specifically their systematic familiarization with the cultures of other nationalities.

230. Despite the deterioration of the situation as regards the organization of children's summer holidays due to the high cost of travel and accommodation and the decline in the number of children's summer camps, every year the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic issues a special order on the organization of children's summer holidays. In 1996, the Republican budget allocated 2 million som for this purpose.

231. The activities of the non-governmental organizations, mainly financed from international funds, has been stepped up. Thus, the NGOs have intensified their work on the implementation of educational and cultural projects. In the lead is the Meerim Foundation under whose sponsorship 21 children's educational centres covering every region of the Republic have been set up. A sustained effort is being made to seek out talented and gifted children, particularly from the remoter regions of the Republic and especially from low-income families. Festivals, competitions and children's events are being arranged and the winners awarded personal scholarships. The Foundation is devoting considerable attention to developing

and supporting folk and classical art. Five international young talent festivals have been held. A considerable number of educational and other projects have also been implemented by the Soros Foundation-Kyrgyzstan.

232. Evidence of the attention being paid by the State to children's leisure, recreational and cultural activities is the holding of traditional Republican children's events and festivals: Protection of Children Day, the President's Christmas party Altyn Balaty, the Students' Ball, the ABC Holiday, etc. The children of Kyrgyzstan regularly participate in international festivals in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States. Virtually all the Republic's young people took part in the nationwide celebration devoted to the millennium of the epic Manas.

XI. SPECIAL PROTECTION MEASURES
(arts. 22, 38, 39, 40, 37 (b)-(d), 32-36)

A. Children in situations of emergency

1. Refugee children (art. 22)

233. The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic has adopted a number of decisions on general measures to assist and provide for the reception and accommodation of people forced to leave Tajikistan for the Kyrgyz Republic.

234. Decision of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic No. 340 of 24 July 1996 approving the provisional Regulations on refugees in the Kyrgyz Republic established the legal status of refugees and the procedure for recognizing a person as a refugee and gave legal, economic and social guarantees concerning the protection of the rights of refugees in the Kyrgyz Republic. Decision of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic No. 413 of 29 August 1996 introducing amendments and additions to Decision of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic No. 518 of 30 November 1995 approving the Regulations on the Inter-Departmental Commission of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic on the problems of refugees and other categories of migrants provided for measures to improve the State regulation of migration and set up a government commission on the problems of refugees and other categories of migrants.

235. Following their arrival in Kyrgyzstan, refugee families have experienced difficulty in securing accommodation and employment and in obtaining other social assistance. On 1 October 1997 there were 15,374 refugees in the Kyrgyz Republic. This was 1,300 or 8 per cent less than at the end of 1996. The main reason for this would seem to be the adoption by some of the refugees of Kyrgyz nationality, which also improves the living conditions of every family taking this decision and particularly of the children who make up half of each family (for 7,400 adults there are 8,000 children under the age of 16).

236. As a result of the social measures that have been taken, 623 people have obtained permanent employment, 645 families (3,942 people) are working on peasant farms, and 1,425 hectares have been allocated for peasant farms and

the construction of housing for 294 families; in 1996 and the first quarter of 1997, the average expenditure on benefits was about 1 million som.

237. The basic principle of refugee resettlement should be the development of initiative and independence with the possibility of some State aid.

2. Children in armed conflicts (art. 38), including physical and psychological recovery and social integration (art. 39)

238. Under the domestic legislation, children in situations of emergency, in particular refugee children and children involved in armed conflicts and natural disasters who are in need of physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration, receive material, medical and other assistance and, where necessary, are found places in a children's home or clinic.

239. According to the legislation in force, persons under 18 years of age may not be recruited into the armed forces. Persons under 15 years of age are completely in the care of their parents or those in loco parentis or are brought up in State boarding institutions.

240. In 1997, about 70 refugee children with various ailments were sent for treatment to a health camp located in the Alamudun raion of Chui oblast. Every year about 6,000 children take holidays and recuperate in children's camps organized by the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic and the Trade Union Federation of the Kyrgyz Republic. These children are mainly from large and needy families or orphans.

B. Children in conflict with the law

1. The administration of juvenile justice (art. 40)

241. The Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Administrative Offences Code of the Kyrgyz Republic and the Regulations on the Commissions for Minors provide special measures for the social protection of minors. For the first time, in the new Penal Code of the Kyrgyz Republic, which enters into force at the beginning of 1998, an entire section is devoted to the criminal responsibility of minors. The incorporation of this section in the new Penal Code of the Kyrgyz Republic satisfies one of the main requirements of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, namely that no child shall be deprived of his or her liberty unlawfully or arbitrarily. The criminal responsibility of individuals committing crimes before the age of 16 has been considerably narrowed. The court must take into account the age of the accused as a mitigating circumstance. At the same time, if the commission of a crime against a minor or with a minor as accomplice may be treated as an aggravating circumstance.

242. Under the Penal Code in force in the Kyrgyz Republic, individuals who commit an offence after reaching the age of 16 are criminally responsible. For the most serious offences criminal responsibility begins at the age of 14.

243. A court, the procurator and, when the procurator so agrees, the investigator may relieve a person under 18 of criminal responsibility if he or she has committed an act which, although prima facie constituting an offence,

poses no great threat to society and refer the matter to a commission for minors, provided that the circumstances of the case and the character of the offender are such that correction is possible without resorting to criminal punishment.

244. In addition to a lawyer, a parent or teacher may be present during the interrogation of a minor accused of a crime. Juvenile proceedings are governed both by the general rules of criminal procedure and by the special provisions relating to minors of the Code of Criminal Procedure now in force. In criminal cases the age of the minor, his or her domestic circumstances and upbringing, the motives for and circumstances of the offence, and the possible involvement of adult instigators must be established.

245. An individual who commits a crime before reaching the age of 18 may not be sentenced to more than 10 years' imprisonment. Minors cannot be sentenced to capital punishment.

2. Children deprived of their liberty, including any form of detention, imprisonment or placement in custodial settings (art. 37 (b)-(d))

246. In the Kyrgyz Republic no one may be arrested other than by court order or with the approval of the procurator. Arrest consists in being taken into custody. A lawyer may intervene in a criminal proceeding from the moment anyone is detained or arrested, and in juvenile cases the participation of defence counsel is mandatory.

247. Minors can be detained and taken into custody only in exceptional circumstances, when justified by the seriousness of the offence committed, and in the specific cases established by law. The detention of a child must be immediately reported to the parents or the persons answerable for them, as well as to the procurator's office. A minor may not be held in the same room as detained adults or persons who have been arrested or convicted.

248. Under the criminal law of the Kyrgyz Republic, in the case of minors deprivation of liberty may not take the form of a prison regime.

249. In the Kyrgyz Republic there is one educational-labour colony for boys with an annual average of about 100 inmates and one children's holding unit with an annual average of 70-80 inmates. Contrary to the requirements of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, girl convicts are kept with women convicts, but they are few in number (15-20). Such security measures as straitjackets and firearms are not used where minors are concerned.

250. The operational system of an educational-labour colony for minors includes:

- regulation of the procedure for modifying the conditions of detention on the basis of the inmates' behaviour and the results of the correctional process;

- a training and workshop complex providing general education, vocational and technical training and work experience;

- a psychological service, including diagnostic, vocational guidance and psychological counselling units.

251. The international rules for the treatment of prisoners as laid down in the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners and the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice ("the Beijing Rules") cannot be fully implemented because of the lack of funds for prisoner upkeep.

252. To enable the Commissions for Minors, which decide whether juvenile offenders should be sent for correction to special educational institutions, to analyse the evidence in sufficient depth, on 27 December 1994 the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic issued Decision No. 893 approving a new version of the Regulations on Commissions for Minors which provides for the mandatory participation of the procurator and a lawyer.

253. Both the existing and the new Penal Codes of the Kyrgyz Republic contain provisions indicating that punishment is not intended to inflict physical suffering or undermine human dignity.

3. The sentencing of juveniles, in particular the prohibition of capital punishment and life imprisonment (art. 37)

254. Individuals aged from 14 to 16 are criminally liable only for murder, the deliberate infliction of bodily harm resulting in the impairment of health, rape, robbery, theft, malicious hooliganism, deliberately destroying or damaging State, public or personal property with serious consequences, theft of a firearm, ammunition or explosives, and theft of narcotics, and also for deliberately committing acts capable of causing the derailment of a train.

255. Minors cannot be sentenced to capital punishment and cannot be sentenced to deprivation of liberty for more than 10 years; a special conditional early release and commutation of sentence procedure has been established for them.

4. Physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration (art. 39)

256. In recent years, various methods and forms of social, medical and other work to achieve the physical and psychological recovery, social reintegration and social protection of children have acquired special significance as a result of worsening social, economic and other problems. A comprehensive approach to the task is reflected in the legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic regulating the social protection of orphans and children deprived of parental care.

257. In a number of regions of the country facilities of the boarding school type have begun to be set up; in Bishkek, through the agency of the international organizations and the Children's Fund of the Kyrgyz Republic, a voluntary temporary shelter has been opened for adolescents without parental, vocational or other social ties or without parental support or means of subsistence. In the shelter the children are provided with food, bedding, medical attention and help in finding school places, jobs or a guardian, and in solving other problems. Moreover, the 185-place Krasnorech boarding school

for mentally retarded orphans was opened in 1995, the 100-place Aksui children's home in 1996, and in 1997 the 200-place Myrza-Akin boarding school for orphans and children deprived of parental support.

258. Socio-psychological assistance centres have been organized to help solve the social, psychological, pedagogical, legal and moral problems connected with the education and upbringing of children and adolescents and to improve the situation of problem families. These centres assist the government education, health and internal affairs authorities and other State and public organizations in their preventive work with adolescents. As soon as the necessary funds are available, similar institutions will be established in the Republic's regional centres.

C. Children in situations of exploitation, including physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration

1. Economic exploitation, including child labour (art. 32)

259. The labour legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic guarantees each child the right to protection from economic exploitation and from having to do any work that is likely to be hazardous, to interfere with the child's education or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. The Labour Code of the Kyrgyz Republic establishes a minimum age for employment and mandatory requirements as regards the length of the work day and the working conditions for minors, their rights in the area of labour relations and their pay. The hiring of persons under the age of 15 is not permitted and persons under the age of 18 may not be employed to do heavy labour or to work under harmful or dangerous conditions.

260. For individuals aged 16 and 17 the work week is 36 hours, while for those aged 15 it is 24 hours. Under the Employment Act, 16- and 17-year-old minors can register for unemployment and be paid benefits. In 1996, altogether 5,100 such persons received unemployment benefits. The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic has approved a programme entitled "Labour market and promotion of employment in the Kyrgyz Republic in 1996-1997 and up to the year 2005". Thus, Decision of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic No. 325 of 2 June 1997 approved:

- tasks relating to the regulation of the regional labour markets in the Kyrgyz Republic;
- new job creation forecasts for the Kyrgyz Republic in 1997 at oblast level;
- job creation and labour movement forecasts for the Kyrgyz Republic in 1997 at ministry and administrative department level;
- the outline National Programme "Labour market and employment in 1997-1999 and up to the year 2005";
- the model Regulations concerning business incubators in the Kyrgyz Republic, and other measures.

These form the basis of the social policy of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic in the area of employment.

261. It is planned to organize 123,600 additional jobs in 1998, up to 136,300 in 1999, and a further 142,400 in 2000.

262. Compliance with the labour legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic and the occupational safety regulations is monitored by specially empowered State health agencies, the trade unions, the relevant government departments, and the commissions for minors.

263. The scrupulous observance of the labour legislation within the Kyrgyz Republic is verified by the Office of the Procurator of the Kyrgyz Republic and the local procurators' offices. To ensure the effective implementation of measures to protect children from economic exploitation, the legislation and other enactments of the Kyrgyz Republic provide for appropriate disciplinary, administrative and criminal sanctions.

2. Drug abuse (art. 33)

264. In the Kyrgyz Republic there is a tendency for juveniles to start abusing drugs at an ever earlier age. This is because the drug situation in the Republic has taken a sharp turn for the worse. For example, with narcotic-producing crops being grown over wide areas, there has been a substantial increase in the smuggling of Afghan opium into Kyrgyzstan, mainly in transit on its way to other countries. At present, there are 147 adolescents on probation as episodic drug users and 173 as alcohol abusers. In 1996, 3.8 per cent of all the offences recorded were drug-related.

265. The Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Justice are taking measures to identify and treat addicts in the early stages of drug or substance abuse. In the ministries and administrative departments there are special sections and units to deal with illicit drug trafficking. Steps are being taken to eliminate the raw material base for illicit drug production. A special government commission on drug control has been organized to coordinate the actions of the State agencies and the community in this field.

266. In 1994, the Kyrgyz Republic acceded to the 1961, 1971 and 1988 United Nations anti-drug conventions which made possible the Republic's integration into the international system for combating drug abuse. In this connection, the Kyrgyz Republic has established working relations with a number of international organizations and States. The United Nations International Drug Control Programme is providing material assistance and advice.

267. An information campaign is being waged against alcohol and drug abuse, and anonymous treatment is becoming possible. A National Advice and Prevention Centre for Adolescents has been operating since 1987 and the functioning of the treatment units for adolescents is being improved. A pressing issue is that of opening socio-medical rehabilitation centres for

minors. The Penal Code of the Kyrgyz Republic establishes criminal liability for promoting narcotics use among minors and for inducing minors to make non-medical use of medicaments and other substances with a narcotic effect.

268. The major emphasis in the prevention of drug addiction among minors is on voluntary, not compulsory, treatment in out-patient clinics which does not entail isolation from society. There are no centres for the enforced treatment and rehabilitation of juvenile drug addicts in the Kyrgyz Republic.

269. On 25 March 1996, the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic approved a special State programme for combating drug addiction and drug trafficking for 1996-1997. Under this programme, a series of medical prevention, treatment and rehabilitation measures for juvenile drug users was introduced.

3. Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (art. 34)

270. The legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic deploys a series of measures to protect children from sexual abuse, including legal restrictions on the admission of children to video clubs (shops), and measures to prevent the importation of pornographic material and works glorifying violence and cruelty. Measures to preclude the involvement of minors in the making, distribution, advertising or sale of products with an erotic content are planned. Despite the adoption of such measures there are cases of violation of the laws protecting children from sexual abuse.

271. Under the Penal Code of the Kyrgyz Republic, the rape of a minor, sodomizing of a minor, sexual relations with a person under 16, entering into de facto marital relations with a person under marriageable age, corruption of a minor, and the involvement of a minor in crime and, in particular, prostitution are recognized as aggravated offences punishable by deprivation of liberty.

272. The new Penal Code of the Kyrgyz Republic also establishes criminal liability for sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.

4. Sale, trafficking and abduction (art. 35)

273. The present Penal Code of the Kyrgyz Republic makes abducting someone else's child or substituting a child for gain or other personal motives punishable by up to 5 years' imprisonment. The new Penal Code of the Kyrgyz Republic introduces punishment for the sale of children. The Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others, which has been ratified by the Kyrgyz Republic, provides for a series of measures to protect children.

D. Children belonging to a national minority (art. 30)

274. Under the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic, children belonging to national minorities have equal rights irrespective of origin, sex, race, nationality, language, religion or religious convictions. According to the State Language Act of the Kyrgyz Republic, children belonging to an ethnic or linguistic minority have the right to an education and the dissemination of books and information in their native language and to the enjoyment of their

national culture. The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic has adopted a number of decisions guaranteeing the right to preserve and develop one's culture, the right to choose any language as one's own and to study and use it, and the right to preserve and observe one's national customs. A public association, the Assembly of the People of Kyrgyzstan, has been set up with the aim of asserting and protecting the interests of the national minorities which, together with the Kyrgyz, form the people of Kyrgyzstan.

X. CONCLUSIONS

275. Thus, from the work done in preparing the National Report of the Kyrgyz Republic on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child it is possible to draw the following conclusions.

276. The Convention was ratified by the youthful Kyrgyz Republic in the third year of its independence in the midst of a complex socio-economic situation involving the introduction of extensive reforms accompanied by economic difficulties which sharply curtailed the possibilities of supplying the social services previously provided by the State, while new forms of social support, including support from the private sector, had not yet been developed. Nevertheless, in the three years which have passed since the ratification of the Convention, with the support of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic, A. Akayev, the governmental and non-governmental organizations have made definite progress.

277. The Convention on the Rights of the Child has become a reality in Kyrgyzstan. An important task for the next few years will be to improve the level of protection afforded to children and to promote their rights. We clearly understand that a sustained and steady effort will be required on the part of all those now working on the implementation of the Convention in order that the principles it establishes may be incorporated not only in the legislation and administrative practice of the Kyrgyz Republic but also in the everyday life of its citizens.

278. Widespread discussion of the draft national report at meetings with non-governmental organizations, international donors, teachers, doctors and members of parliament and round tables on television and radio, together with the showing of films on the situation of children in Kyrgyzstan, have demonstrated the need for the adoption of the State programme "Children of Kyrgyzstan", which defines a strategy aimed at the more effective assimilation of the Convention with a view to ensuring the more stable development of society, as well as for the holding of parliamentary hearings on the implementation of the Convention.

279. The monitoring of the implementation of the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child will be facilitated by regularly compiling and improving statistical information that reflects the differences between individual regions and districts and between urban and rural communities, the planning of budget appropriations and expenditure in the sectors that promote children's interests, and changes in the scale of international aid received or proposed for the purpose of implementing children's rights.

280. The State will continue to pursue a social policy which takes into account the implementation of children's rights, while alleviating poverty and improving the quality of employment and training for adolescents, teaching them skills in demand on the labour market, creating favourable conditions for disabled children and orphans living in children's homes and boarding schools and combining, on an equal footing, State financing with the resources of the local authorities and aid obtained from the international donor organizations.